

# CHALLENGE

Hi Parents,

At Dive Student Ministry, we love partnering with you in your teen's spiritual life. I am excited to share with you that our summer trip this year is **Challenge Conference 2024** this coming July. Challenge is the Evangelical Free Church of America's national youth gathering that only happens every other year.

## Why Challenge?

There are several reasons why our youth ministry chose Challenge as our summer event:

1. Challenge is gospel-centered. At Dive, we earnestly desire that all our events begin and end with solid Gospel-centered teaching.
2. Challenge equips students to stand confidently in their faith.
3. Challenge provides post-event tools for each student to help them continue to pursue Jesus after the conference.
4. Challenge allows students to honestly evaluate their current walk in their faith and helps them take next steps.
5. Challenge offers space for our youth ministry team to connect with students on a deeper level—helping us, as youth leaders, to continue to minister to each teenager. We love partnering in walking through life with your student.

Challenge blends the best of camp fun, conference worship and teaching, and mission trip service. This blend creates a unique environment that moves beyond the "trip high" to building momentum in students' lives. Students will learn from amazing teachers and in-depth breakout sessions. They'll discover more about world issues through the Apex Mission Experience (one of my personal favorite parts of Challenge!). And they'll serve and worship with thousands of other students from across the country!



Challenge 2024's theme is *From The Mountain*. Some of Jesus' most well-known teachings come from the Sermon on the Mount. "Blessed are the poor in spirit." "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." "Do not judge, or you too will be judged." This message would shock Jesus' audience, and these teachings from thousands of years ago continue to pierce the hearts of His people today. In three short chapters in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus turns our self-centered and narrow view of the world upside down and presents us with a clearer picture life in the Kingdom of God. At Challenge 2024, we'll walk through the Sermon on the Mount and send students from the mountain to their communities with a deeper sense of their calling and purpose as followers of Jesus.

Our group will be traveling to Kansas City by van or bus. We'll stay in hotels near the convention center where Challenge is held. Additionally, students will have opportunities to serve in the city alongside trusted ministry partners.

Our leadership team hopes you will seriously consider supporting your child in attending Challenge 2024. It is an opportunity I don't want anyone to miss. On the next page, you'll find the most frequently asked questions. If you have any questions about this event, email me at [rgamble@crossroadsefc.com](mailto:rgamble@crossroadsefc.com). And while you're at it, check out <https://www.challengeconference.org/> to get a glimpse into what this exciting week could mean for your student.

In Him,

Rich Gamble  
Associate Pastor  
Crossroads Church  
Plymouth, IN

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## **Who is Challenge for?**

We're offering Challenge to our current senior high students (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade). In our prior experience, Challenge is too demanding for our younger junior high students as the week is long and the days are packed.

## **What are the dates of the trip (including travel)?**

The conference dates are June 30-July 6. We'll drive to Kansas City on Sunday, June 30. The conference starts on Monday, July 1. The Conference ends on Friday night, July 5. We'll get a good night's sleep and then return on July 6.

## **How much does it cost to go?**

\$800/person (includes transportation, hotel, conference registration, and 13 meals). This is the closest estimate for cost right now. The largest variable is transportation, as those rates fluctuate. Our goal will be to not go above \$800, and if possible, to bring that price down.

## **What is the cost breakdown?**

- \$350 conference registration (includes 13 meals once the conference starts)
- \$210 hotel (assuming 4 people per room)
- \$200 transportation
- \$40 Monday activity and lunch prior to conference
- Students will be responsible for purchasing their own meals on the road, conference swag, snacks, etc.

## **How is this trip paid for?**

We can raise support from Crossroads, friends, and family to help us reach our financial goal! In addition to the deposit that you pay when you register, Crossroads will have an offering in the spring to help raise support to send us to Challenge. Last time we went to Challenge, that offering fully funded the entire trip for each participant! I can't guarantee that will happen every time. I think it's wise to anticipate that there will be about \$200-\$300 remaining that you will be responsible for. You will have to raise your own money and work hard to contribute to your trip fund. By completing the Challenge application, you agree to be responsible for the remaining balance due by May 19, 2024.

## **What does a day at Challenge typically look like?**

7:00 - 9:00	Breakfast
9:30 - 11:00	Morning Gathering – Worship and teaching, small group breakouts.
11:00 - 1:00	Lunch
1:00 - 5:00	Afternoon Options – Equipping Labs, Outreach, Service, and Apex Missions Experience
4:45 - 6:30	Dinner
5:30 - 7:00	Prayer Moves
7:00 - 9:00	Evening Gathering – Worship and teaching.
9:00 - 9:45	The Huddle – Small Groups.
9:45-11:00	Evening Options – Worship concerts, outside plaza activities, and more!
12:00	Lights Out in hotel rooms

## **How do I sign up?**

Head over to [www.crossroadsefc.com/youth](http://www.crossroadsefc.com/youth) or open our Church Center app and go to Sign Ups and click on the button to register for Challenge. Complete the Crossroads waiver and pay the \$100 deposit by February 25. The deadline to sign up will be February 25, 2024.